A Community-led Vision and Action Plan Gillingham Town Centre

July 2025

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Design South East

Design South East (DSE) is a not-for profit design consultancy focused on supporting local authorities and their stakeholders, including communities, to achieve design excellence through the planning system. DSE brings over 30 years of expertise in design review, working across 14 counties and with more than 50 local authorities in London, the South East, and East. DSE's services include design training and workshops, facilitation and stakeholder engagement, and design code support. DSE began in Chatham as the Kent Architecture Centre and has worked with Kent, Medway, and local communities on schemes of all scales and typologies to support good, healthy, and sustainable placemaking.

BPTW is an urban design and architecture practice focused on transforming not just physical spaces, but people's lives. We are bold. We are innovative. We care. Bringing together a wide range of design specialisms, for over 35 years, innovation in urban design, design coding, planning sustainability, and construction technologies has established our reputation as experts in housing, urban design, neighbourhood placemaking, and mixed-use regeneration. BPTW has extensive Kent-based experience, having delivered award-winning projects in the region across a range of scales for many years for local authorities, housing associations, developers and housebuilders.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 4

About this project 4
A co-created vision 5
The Gillingham Community Panel 6

2. GILLINGHAM THE PLACE 8

Gillingham's History 8
Community Memories 9
Wider Context 10
Gillingham today 12
The Town Centre 14
Town Centre Areas 16

3. VISION 18

Created by its residents 18
Western Gateway & High Street West 22
High Street East and Station Gateway 24
Canterbury/ Skinner Street 26
Jeffery Street 28
Theodore Place/ Green Street and Balmoral Gardens 30

4. ACTION PLAN 32

Proposed Town Centre Wide Strategies 33
Western Gateway 34
Western Gateway 35
High Street West 36
High Street West 37
High Street East 39
Station Gateway 42
Station Gateway 43

Skinner Street / Canterbury Street 46
Jeffery Street 47
Jeffery Street 48
Theodore Place / Green Street 49
Balmoral Gardens 52
Balmoral Gardens 53

5. MAKING IT HAPPEN 55

Next Steps 56
List of Figures 57

1. INTRODUCTION
About this project

The Co-created Vision and Action Plan for Gillingham should be read in conjunction with Appendix 3. Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE, for further details on its co-creation.

The Gillingham Vision and Action Plan provides a structured framework to guide the town centre's evolution in the coming years. Developed through extensive collaboration with the Gillingham Town Centre Community Panel and citizen experts, it builds on the town's strengths while identifying opportunities for positive change.

The Action Plan sets out key projects identified by the Community Panel, outlining practical steps to achieve the Vision. Serving as a guidance tool for collaboration, it provides structured templates, clear priorities, and a pathway for investment to support Gillingham's regeneration.

The Vision and Action Plan was co-designed with the Community Panel, in a process led by Design South East (DSE), an independent design consultancy, and supported by BPTW, an urban design and architecture studio. BPTW also led the development of the final document. The Community Panel steered the overall process, with facilitation from Medway Council Officers. While Councillors were not directly involved to maintain a community-led approach, the MP for Gillingham and Rainham, Naushabah Khan, introduced the first workshop to demonstrate support for the co-design process.

For more information, please refer to Appendix 3. Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE, specifically Workshop 3 | Session 2: The Vision for Gillingham.

A co-created vision

Home of Gillingham Football Club, Gillingham Town Centre is a vibrant, welcoming hub where diverse community spirit thrives, day and night. Bustling with independent shops, multi-cultural cafés, markets and community services and spaces such as the library, it offers a unique shopping and dining experience for all.

With strong links to the Great Lines Heritage Park, the clean and well-maintained green spaces and pedestrian-friendly streets create an inviting, safe and positive environment, where people of all ages and abilities come together to socialise and enjoy cultural events.

The successful businesses, exciting entertainment, and a focus on sustainability, make Gillingham a destination and a place for residents to be proud of - an inclusive, lively town centre that celebrates its history and heritage while embracing the future.

The Vision for Gillingham is guided by four key themes:

1. Improving Streets and Spaces
2. Enhancing Buildings
3. Town Centre Uses
4. Culture and Community Life

These themes address current challenges while remaining adaptable to future needs.

Three core principles—**Sustainability, Stewardship, and Health & Wellbeing**—underpin the Vision, ensuring its long-term resilience and impact.

Artist impression visually representing some of the early ideas and aspirations that emerged from discussions with the Community Panel.

The Gillingham Community Panel

The Process

This Vision and Action Plan has been shaped by Gillingham's Community Panel, who have played an active and vital role in guiding the aspirations for the future of their town centre. Their involvement ensures that the vision is both inclusive and forward-looking. The document has been developed through a collaborative and enthusiastic approach, which includes:

- Town-wide analysis and visioning;
- Community consultation and participation;
- Finding common ground between design ideas and what the community wants;
- Knowledge and skills transfer between the facilitation team and the Community Panel.

Community Panel Selection

The Gillingham Community Panel application process was launched during the Love Gillingham Big Day Out event that was hosted on 1st September 2024. The application process brought together a diverse group of community representatives, all committed to contributing their time and insights through a series of workshops, designed to inform and shape the final Vision document.

Workshop 1: Understanding Aspirations

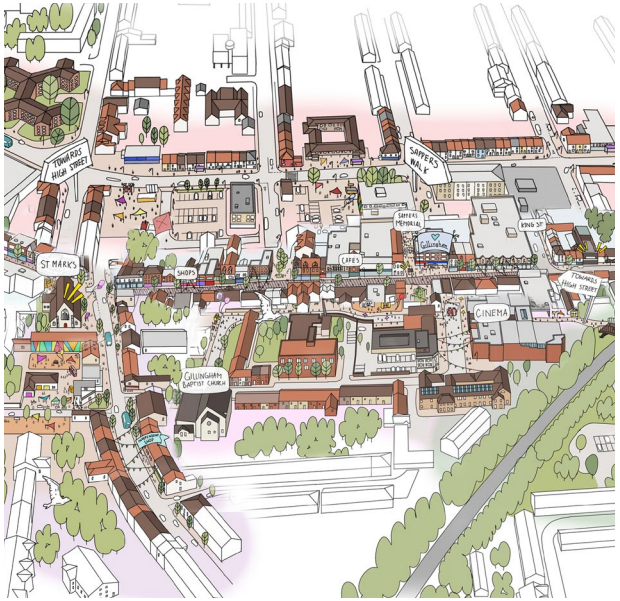
The first workshop introduced panel members to the project's context and ambitions. Together, the Community Panel explored their aspirations and concerns for Gillingham Town Centre, discussing what works well and identifying areas in need of improvement.

Workshop 2: Emerging Themes

The second workshop built on the feedback from the first session, focusing on four emerging themes derived from the most significant positive and negative aspects of the town centre. Panel members reflected on these themes and proposed actionable steps to address the identified issues in different areas.

Workshop 3: The Action Plan

The final workshop focused on reviewing the aspirations for each of the town centre areas and an overall Vision for Gillingham Town Centre. This session also focused on the priorities for the emerging Action Plan (Section 4 of this document) and which projects could have the most significant impact on Gillingham Town Centre.



The Vision: Creating the Vision & Action Plan

The final stage of this process involved shaping the delivery of the Vision for Gillingham and developing a comprehensive Action Plan outlining themed projects and interventions, indicative timeframes, and options for long-term governance including ways of working with Medway Council to ensure the Vision's lasting impact and legacy.

2. GILLINGHAM THE PLACE

Gillingham's History

The settlement of Gillingham was listed in the Domesday Book of 1086 as Gelingeham, in the hundred of Chatham and the county of Kent.

The town's growth was closely linked to the establishment of the Chatham Dockyard, a major naval facility in nearby Chatham. This proximity played a crucial role in Gillingham's transformation from a rural settlement into a key support hub for naval operations.

The Chatham Dockyard was a major centre for shipbuilding and Gillingham benefited economically from this proximity.

Fig.01 Early Medway Towns by R. Creighton

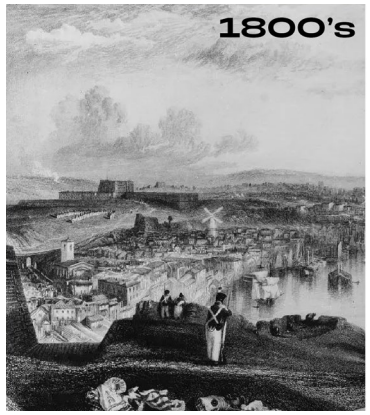


Fig.02 Chatham engraving by William Miller

Fig.04 Historic Dockyard Chatham

On-site developments included the railway (1904), as Medway tram system aiding worker transport. Leisure evolved too, with cinemas, clubs, and sports associations in Gillingham, with its own town centre.

Fig.03 Kent XIX - OS Map

Most Medway towns were tied to dockyard needs. The Industrial Revolution spurred development, barracks were built in Gillingham during wartime and the population rose.

Fig.05 Gillingham High Street 1978

Originally a through street, some older citizens remember the presence of cars on the high street prior to pedestrianisation in the 1970s or 80s.

All quotes were provided by the Community Panel in the initial workshop. For more information, please refer to Appendix 3. Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE, specifically Section 2: Workshop 1 | Ice-breaker.

Community Memories

Fig.06 Spectators at the Gillingham Christmas lights switch-on

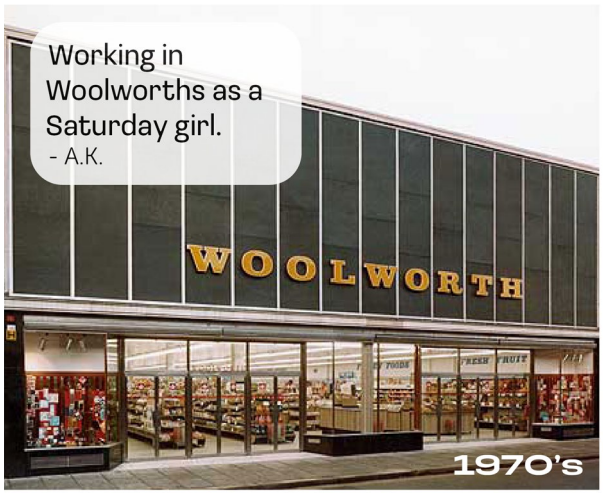


Fig.07 Gillingham Woolworth Store

I remember when I first worked for Gillingham library and an artist drew myself and a colleague for a project. The picture was in the high street!
- R.R.
2017
Fig.08 Gillingham Library & Community Hub

I remember bringing my two daughters to various community events along the high street ... and seeing the girls' excitement.
- A.C.
1980's
Fig.09 Vintage postcards of Gillingham by Stephen Carr

2014
Being part of a Fuse Festival event here in Gillingham. Exciting for children and adults. Paraded through the high street.
- P.C.
Fig.10 Medway's Fuse Festival

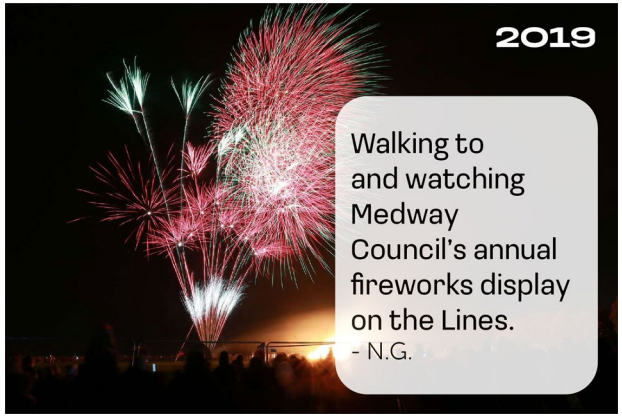


Fig.11 Gillingham's Bonfire fireworks

Wider Context

Gillingham is based in Medway; a historic area centred around the River Medway, which includes towns such as Chatham, Rochester, Strood and Rainham. Medway has a number of social, economic and environmental opportunities and challenges.

Medway Council and partners have worked together on this co-creation initiative to address these challenges and maximise opportunities to drive forward Gillingham's regeneration.

Residents have been actively involved in shaping the future of their town centre through the co-creation approach.

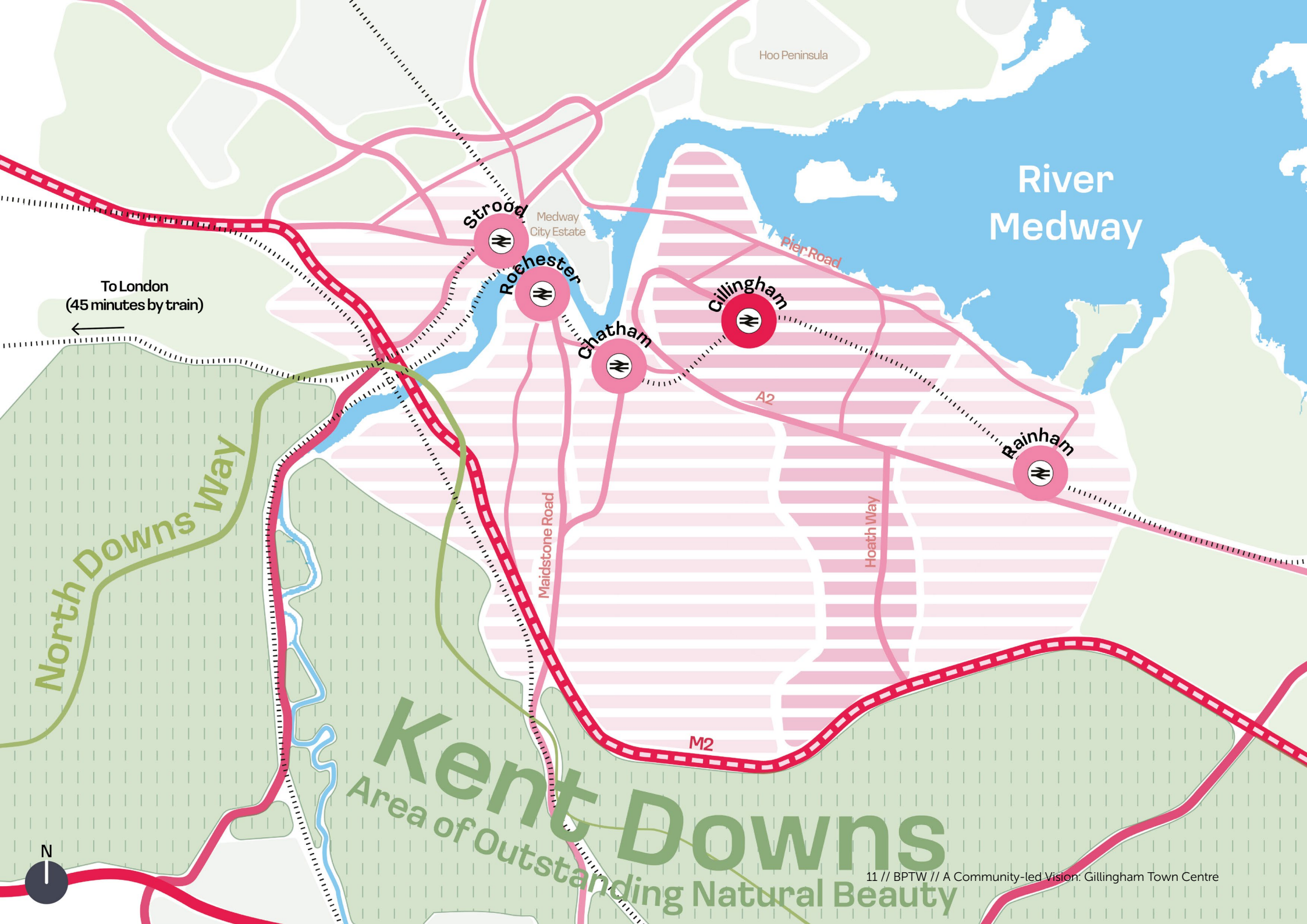
Fig.13 Rochester, historic centre

Fig.15 Chatham, The Paddock

Fig.12 Gillingham, Town Centre

Fig.14 Strood, Town Centre

Fig.16 Rainham, Town Centre


Hoo Peninsula
River Medway
Strood
Medway City Estate
Rochester
Chatham
Gillingham
Rainham
Pier Road
A2
M2
Maidstone Road
Hoath Way
To London
(45 minutes by train)
North Downs Way
Kent Downs
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
N

Gillingham today

Gillingham offers a range of educational, leisure, health and well-being, and social facilities. This overview highlights key sites that naturally emerged from discussions with the Community Panel, reflecting the places that play an important role in town centre life:

- **Educational Institutions**: located north of the town centre, Gillingham is home to the Medway campuses of University of Kent, University of Greenwich, Canterbury Christ Church University and MidKent College, providing higher education opportunities for residents and the wider region.
- **Leisure and Open Spaces**: Medway Park Sports and Leisure Centre, situated to the west of the town centre, is a hub for fitness and recreation. It is adjacent to the Great Lines Heritage Park, a prominent open space and conservation area with deep ties to the area's maritime history.
- **Healthcare Facilities**: the Medway Maritime Hospital serves as the primary health facility for Gillingham, employing many residents and catering to the broader community's medical needs.
- **Sports and Entertainment**: Gillingham's football stadium, located within walking distance of the town centre and approximately 15 minutes from the train station, is a key destination for sports fans and community events.

Fig.17 University of Kent Medway Campus

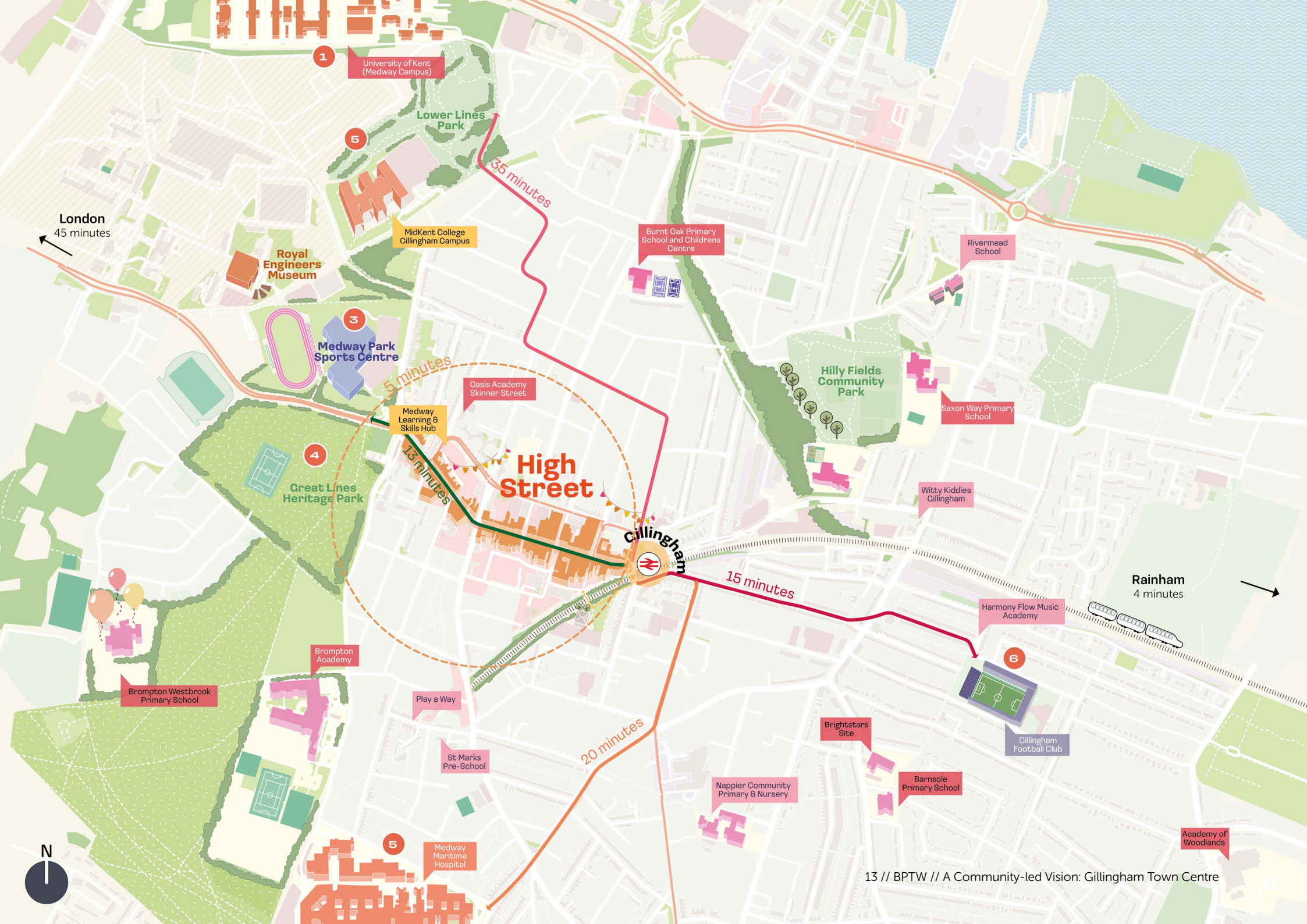
Fig.18 MidKent College Campus

Fig.19 Medway Park Sports and Leisure Centre

Fig.20 Great Lines Heritage Park

Fig.21 Medway Maritime Hospital

Fig.22 Gillingham Football Stadium


London
45 minutes
1
University of Kent (Medway Campus)
Lower Lines Park
5
35 minutes
MidKent College Cillingham Campus
Royal Engineers Museum
3
Medway Park Sports Centre
5 minutes
Oasis Academy Skinner Street
Medway Learning & Skills Hub
4
Great Lines Heritage Park
15 minutes
High Street
Cillingham
Burnt Oak Primary School and Childrens Centre
Rivermead School
Hilly Fields Community Park
Saxon Way Primary School
Witty Kiddies Cillingham
15 minutes
Rainham
4 minutes
Harmony Flow Music Academy
6
Cillingham Football Club
Brompton Academy
Brompton Westbrook Primary School
Play a Way
St Marks Pre-School
20 minutes
Brightstars Site
Barnsole Primary School
Nappier Community Primary & Nursery
Academy of Woodlands
5
Medway Maritime Hospital
N

The Town Centre

Gillingham Town Centre is defined by its linear High Street, which connects the railway station to the war memorial at Mill Road. The character of the High Street evolves along its length:

- **Eastern End**: this area is open and bustling, serving as a hub of activity with a vibrant twice-weekly market.
- **Western End**: In contrast, the western end features a more intimate and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere, characterised by smaller independent shops, enhanced by street trees, street furniture, and the surrounding architecture.

The areas surrounding the High Street, with their diverse uses and historical buildings, play a vital role in the town's identity. They offer significant opportunities for future regeneration, strengthening connections, and enhancing the overall vitality of the town centre.

The following images highlight some of the key buildings, assets, and destinations identified by the Community Panel as integral to Gillingham's community and character.

Fig.23 War Memorial at Mill Road

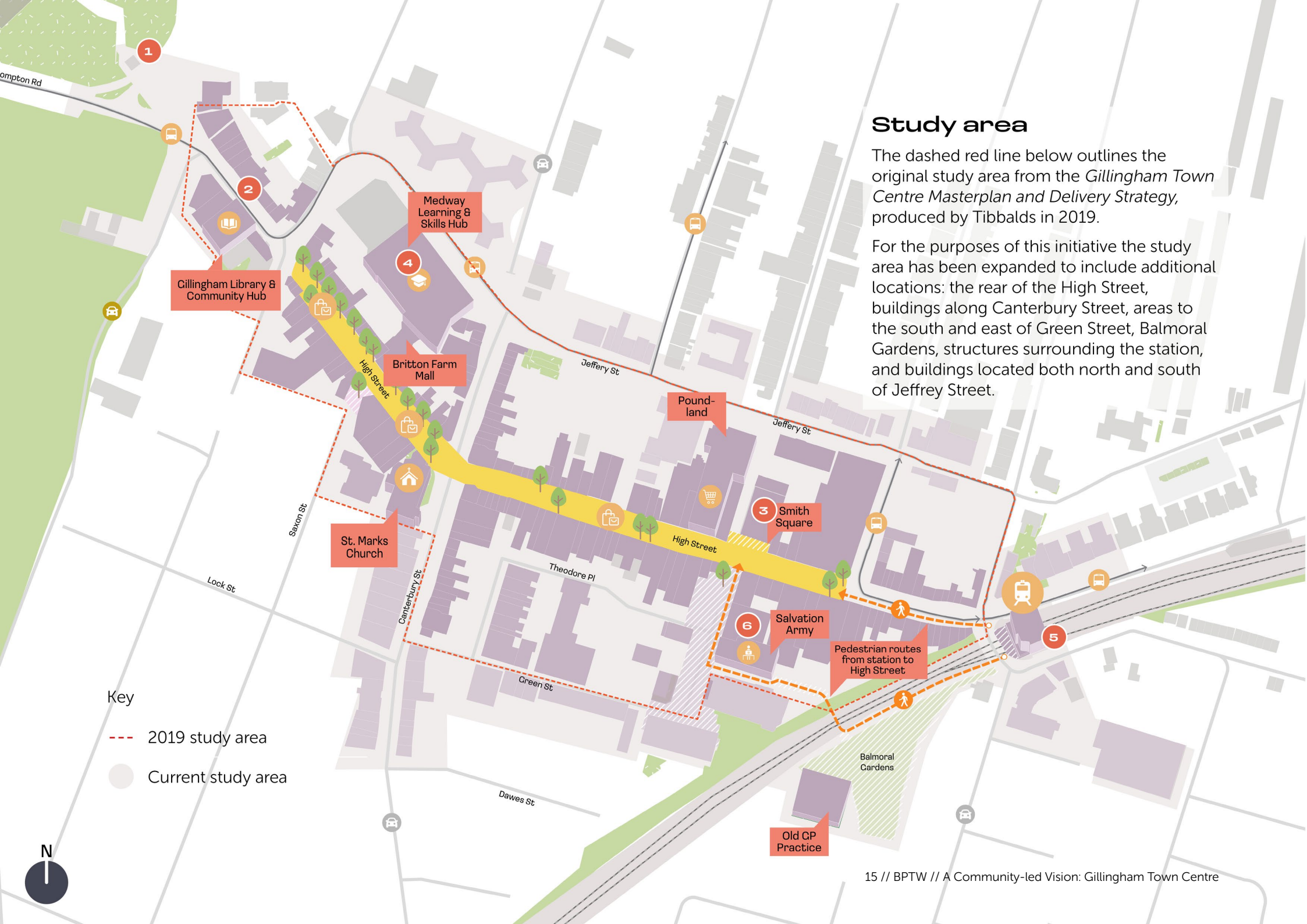
Fig.24 Gillingham Library & Community Hub

Fig.25 Sappers Walk: Historic Mural

Fig.26 Medway Skills & Learning Hub

Fig.27 Gillingham Railway Station

Fig.28 Salvation Army



Study area

The dashed red line below outlines the original study area from the *Gillingham Town Centre Masterplan and Delivery Strategy,* produced by Tibbalds in 2019.

For the purposes of this initiative the study area has been expanded to include additional locations: the rear of the High Street, buildings along Canterbury Street, areas to the south and east of Green Street, Balmoral Gardens, structures surrounding the station, and buildings located both north and south of Jeffrey Street.

For more information, please refer to Appendix 3. Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE, specifically Section 4 Workshop 1 | Session 2: Gillingham Now - places and spaces

Town Centre Areas

The Community Panel began by examining Gillingham's High Street, eight distinct town centre areas were proposed as a framework for analysis by the Panel, based on their unique character and function. This approach allowed smaller groups within the panel to focus on specific sections, identifying what works well and where improvements are needed.

The defined town centre areas are:

- Western Gateway
- High Street West
- High Street East
- Station Gateway
- Canterbury/ Skinner Street
- Jeffery Street
- Theodore Place/ Green Street
- Balmoral Gardens

The tables to the right summarise key themes from the Community Panel's discussions, focusing on top positives and top areas for improvement for each area. These summaries help translate the panel's insights into a foundation for the Action Plan.

High Street spaces

Western Gateway	
Positives	**Challenges**
Connection from the High Street to the Great Heritage Lines Park	Derelict space in Marlborough Road used as a dumping site
Gillingham Library and Community Hub	Not enough lighting, it does not feel safe
Variety of uses in one street	Lack of maintenance and garbage pick up

Table 1: Western Gateway

High Street West	
Positives	**Challenges**
Nice local cafés. Residents would like to see more with outside seating areas	Broken planters, potentially an easy fix
Lovely trees with lots of shadows	Not enough lighting and lack of maintenance
Nice Caribbean shops. It would be nice to see more diversity	Large amount of cars access the high street during market days or to supply the shops

Table 2 High Street West

High Street East	
Positives	**Challenges**
Cafés on this side of the High Street have more seating spaces	Not enough activities for young people. Antisocial behaviour
Love the market, opportunity to expand it in the west side of the High Street	Not enough trees, big difference against High Street west
Buildings are beautiful	Amount of cars accessing it or the market leaves little space for people to walk

Table 3: High Street East

Station Gateway	
Positives	**Challenges**
Good location	Lots of traffic, the lights take long for pedestrians
Nice spill out space by the steps, a meeting spot	No spaces inside the station like a café to wait for someone
It is new and it looks well kept	No drop-off, very hard to park

Table 4: Station Gateway

Adjacent spaces

Canterbury/ Skinner Street	
Positives	**Challenges**
Different types of shops throughout both streets	Not enough awareness of the independent shops in this area
Opportunity for pop-ups in empty units	Limited parking opportunities due to double yellow lines
St Marks Church is a peaceful space and the bus stop is right in front	Litter and lack of street lighting

Table 5: Canterbury/ Skinner St

Jeffery Street	
Positives	**Challenges**
Good transportation links	Back of buildings and empty/ inactive frontages
Opportunity for pop-ups in empty units	Rubbish and fly-tipping in empty sites
Medway Skills & Learning Hub - opportunity for student sites/ residences	Lights don't work on streets connecting to the High Street

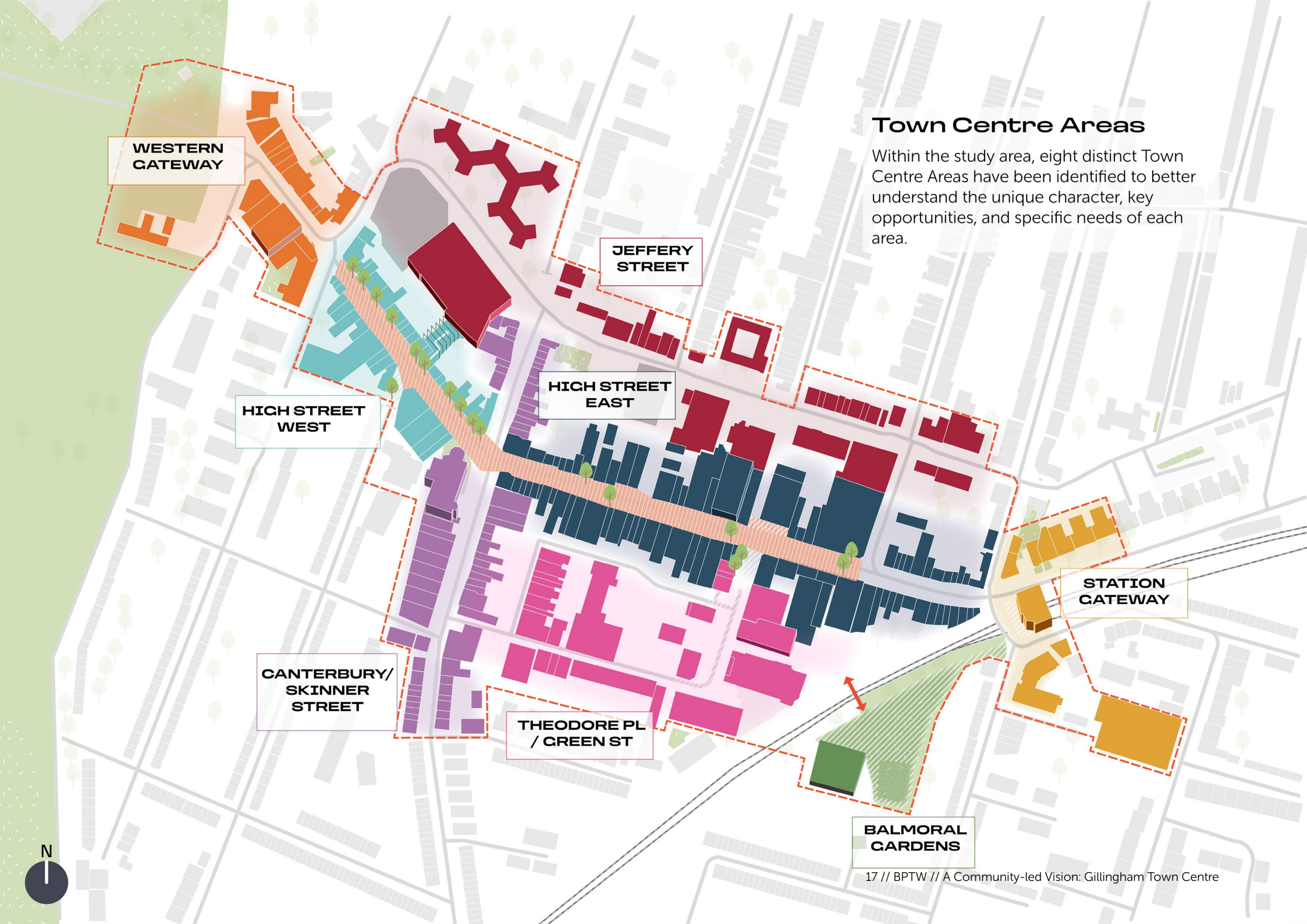
Table 6: Jeffery Street

Theodore Pl/ Green St	
Positives	**Challenges**
Nice architecture	Same issue with lighting like other places
Good connection to High Street with great independent shops	Green Street is full of building backs and a lot of litter around
Opportunity for empty units to become pop-up spaces	

Table 7: Theodore Pl/ Green St

Balmoral Gardens	
Positives	**Challenges**
Good green space including a play area	Residents don't like the bridge as it is dark and it leads to an alleyway
GP good location access from both station or High Street	Graffiti on the back of houses have become a spot for antisocial behaviour

Table 8: Balmoral Gardens



Town Centre Areas

Within the study area, eight distinct Town Centre Areas have been identified to better understand the unique character, key opportunities, and specific needs of each area.

3. VISION

Created by its residents

Emerging Themes

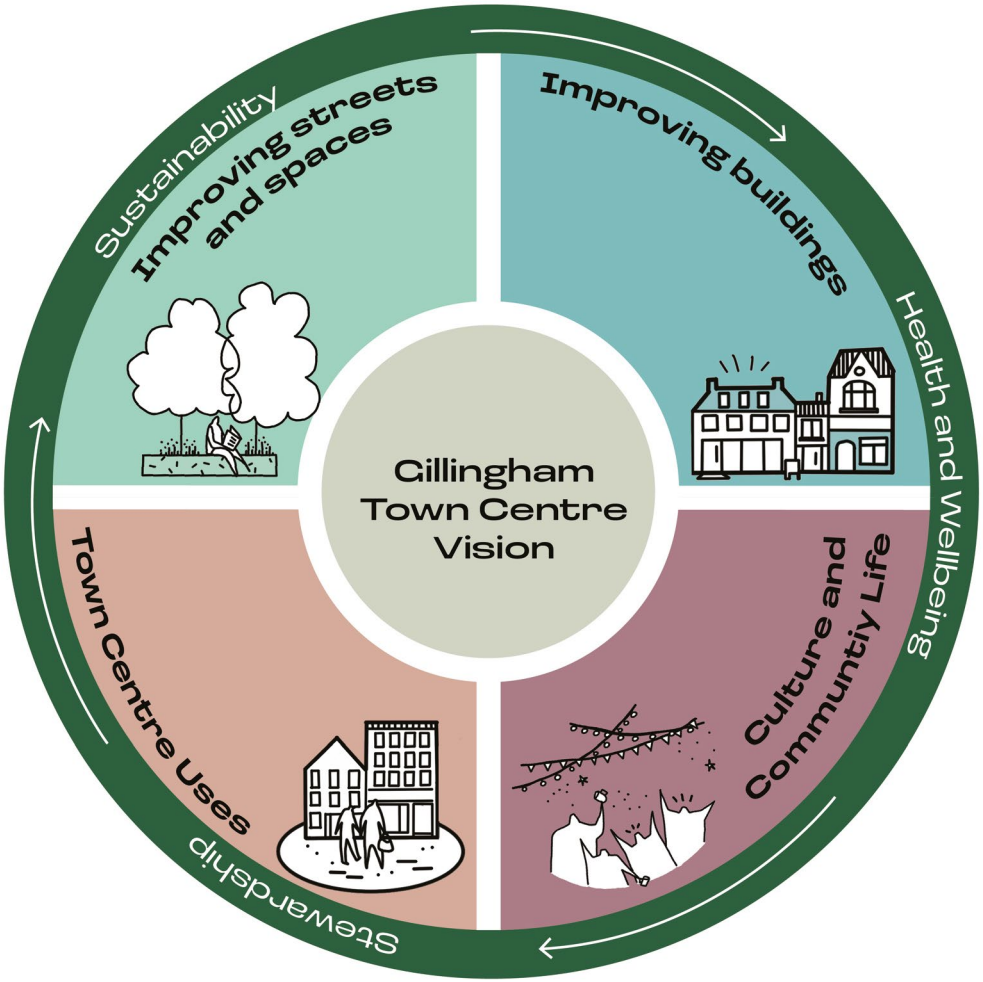
The concerns, priorities, and favourite aspects of Gillingham's town centre, gathered through Community Panel discussions, were consolidated into four key themes:

- Improving Streets and Spaces
- Enhancing Buildings
- Town Centre Uses
- Culture and Community Life

Each of these themes contributes to shaping and guiding the Vision for Gillingham's Town Centre, with a collective focus on ensuring it remains diverse, inclusive, and adaptable for future generations.

These emerging themes not only address present-day challenges but are also designed to be flexible, enabling the town centre to evolve in response to future needs. Underpinning this adaptability are three core principles that ensure the Vision remains resilient and impactful:

- **Sustainability**: Ensuring that improvements to the town centre foster long-term environmental, economic, and social resilience, promoting a sustainable future for the community.
- **Stewardship**: Empowering residents and stakeholders to take an active role in the care, maintenance, and development of the town centre, fostering a shared sense of responsibility.
- **Health and Wellbeing**: Prioritising initiatives that enhance both the physical and mental health of residents and visitors, creating a vibrant, well-rounded environment for all.



The vision for Gillingham is an AI interpretation of the comments, activities, and feedback received from the Community Panel capturing a collective perspective on its future.

For more information, please refer to Append*ix 3. Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE*, specifically Section 6 Workshop 2 | Session 1: Emerging Themes.

The Vision

Home of Gillingham Football Club, Gillingham Town Centre is a vibrant, welcoming hub where diverse community spirit thrives, day and night. Bustling with independent shops, multi-cultural cafés, markets and community services and spaces such as the library, it offers a unique shopping and dining experience for all. With strong links to the Great Lines Heritage Park, the clean and well-maintained green spaces and pedestrian-friendly streets create an inviting, safe and positive environment, where people of all ages and abilities come together to socialise and enjoy cultural events. The successful businesses, exciting entertainment, and a focus on sustainability, make Gillingham a destination and a place for residents to be proud of - an inclusive, lively town centre that celebrates its history and heritage while embracing the future.

Improving Streets and Spaces

Celebrate Gillingham's historic High Street, diverse neighbourhoods, and distinctive landmarks, enhancing its bustling markets, and green spaces to attract visitors.

Improving Buildings

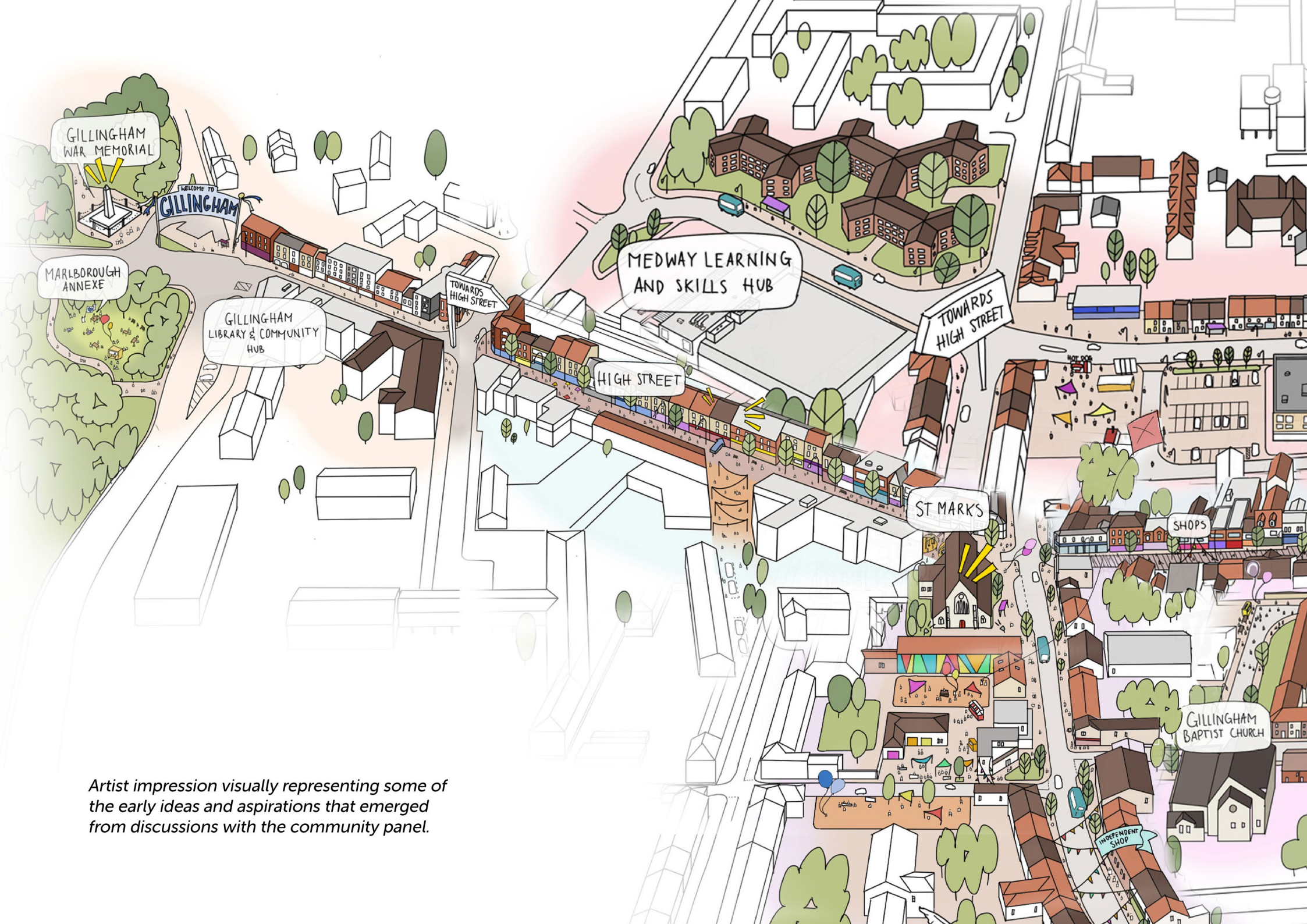
Restore building façades and spill out space, enhance and maintain existing buildings whilst fostering community pride.

Town Centre Uses

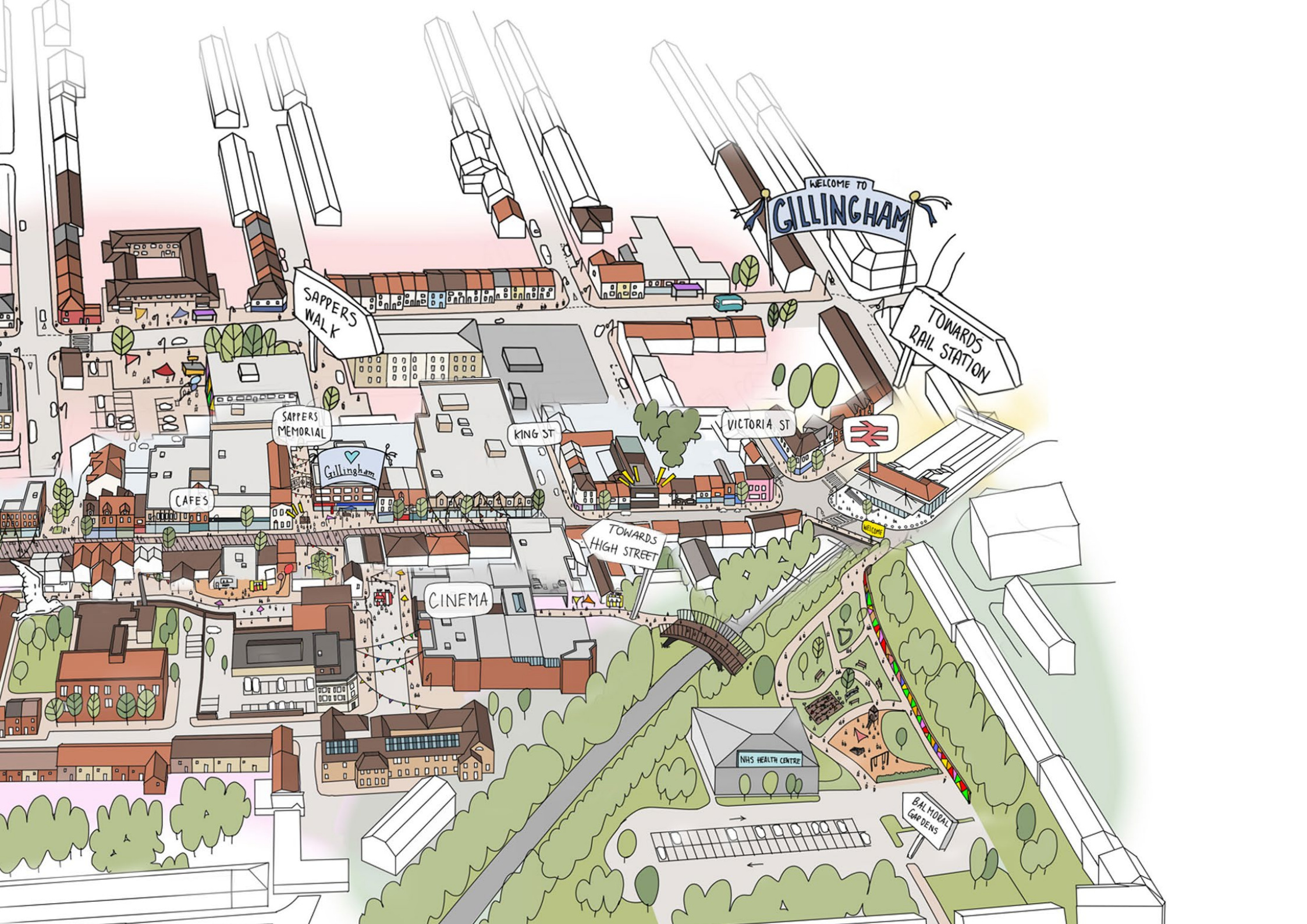
Reinvigorate the town centre by identifying opportunities for future new uses, community services and employment opportunities.

Culture and Community Life

Work with the diverse people of Gillingham to develop proposals that are meaningful to all, now and into the future.



Artist impression visually representing some of the early ideas and aspirations that emerged from discussions with the community panel.


WELCOME TO
GILLINGHAM
SAPPERS WALK
TOWARDS RAIL STATION
SAPPERS MEMORIAL
Gillingham
KING ST
VICTORIA ST
CAFES
TOWARDS HIGH STREET
CINEMA
WELCOME
NHS HEALTH CENTRE
BALMORAL GARDENS

Western Gateway & High Street West

The Community Panel expressed their aspirations for each of the Town Centre areas. This section is informed by Workshop 2 (Session 2 + 3 of Append*ix 3. Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE)*, where participants worked on defining the Vision and scoping potential actions for each of the eight town centre areas. While initial discussions included brainstorming possible actions, this section remains focused on the Vision.

Western Gateway

The Western Gateway welcomes everyone to Gillingham Town Centre, serving as a vibrant hub for arts and culture, leisure, and community life. It highlights the diverse services and destinations within the town, helping visitors navigate the area through the 'Love Gillingham' brand. Anchored by the much-loved library, this area celebrates the meeting point of the town's historic Great Lines Park, sports centre, and colleges, seamlessly connecting to the bustling High Street. The green, pedestrian-friendly character of the park extends into the gateway, promoting safety and well-being for all.

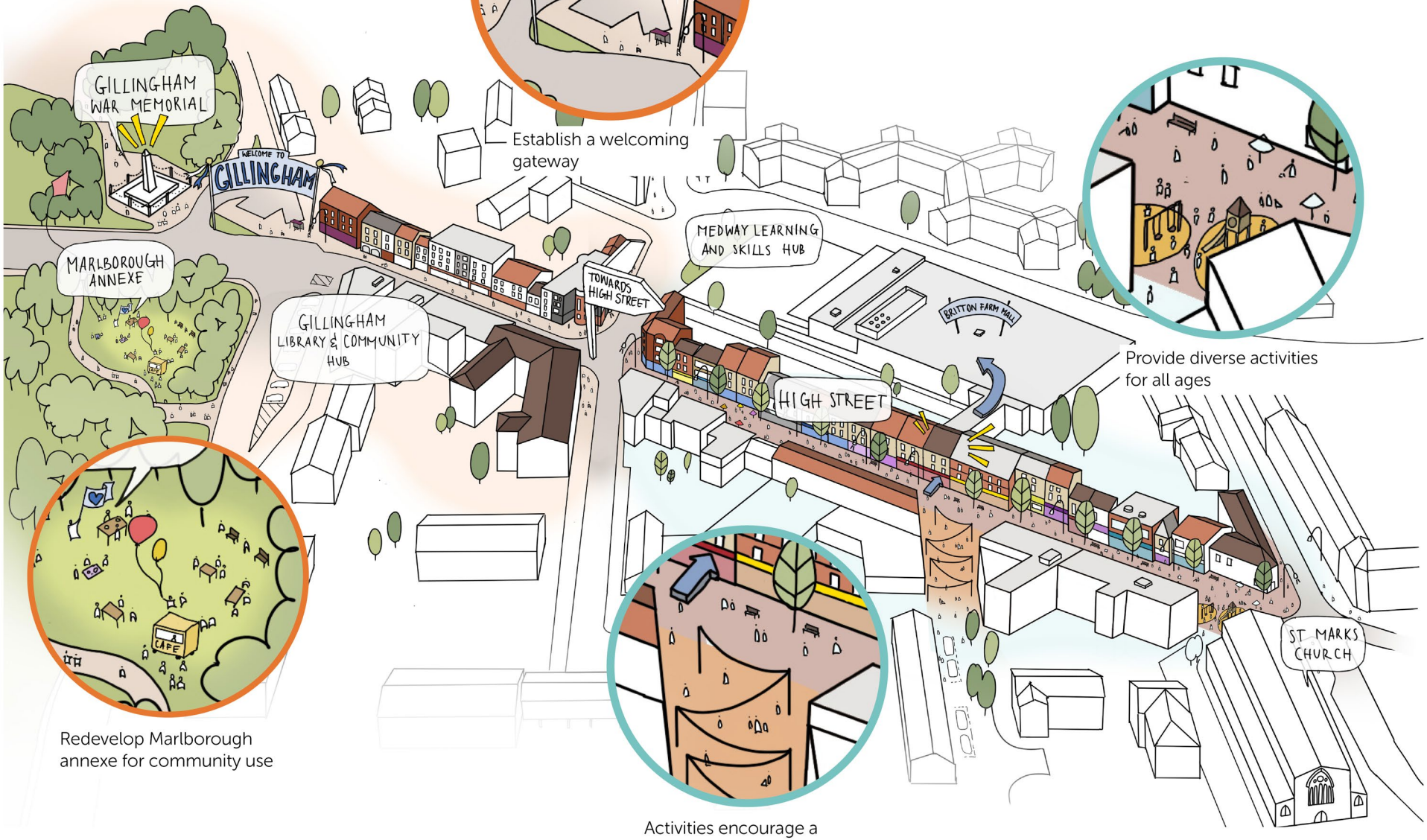
High Street West

The western end of the High Street is a lively, welcoming space where people of all ages come together. Full of community-led spaces and independent businesses with socialising spilling out onto the tree-lined street. This part of town is home to a mental health hub and well-being groups, offering a space to connect and support one another. Local businesses host leisure activities, using indoor and outdoor spaces to engage the community. A mix of independent shops, cafés, and restaurants reflects Gillingham's diverse cultures, with a wayfinding strategy that makes it easy to explore. Safe, well-lit spaces, with seating, greenery, and covered areas, make the High Street enjoyable all year-round.

What could this look like?

Artist impression visually representing some of the early ideas and aspirations that emerged from discussions with the community panel.

For more information, please refer to Appendix 3. *Gillingham Community Panel: Co-Creation Workshops 1, 2 + 3 Report by DSE*, specifically Section 7 Workshop 2 | Session 2 + 3: Defining the Vision, scoping the actions.



Establish a welcoming gateway

Provide diverse activities for all ages

Redevelop Marlborough annexe for community use

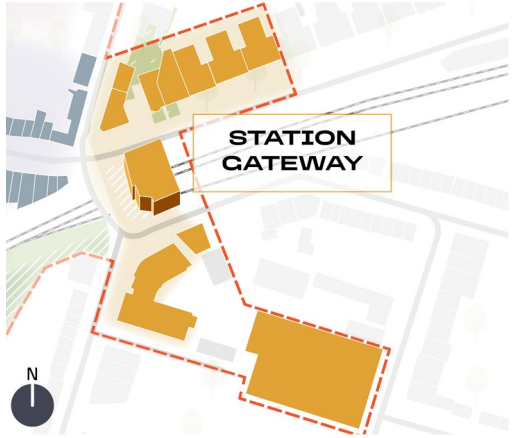
Activities encourage a safe, clean atmosphere

High Street East and Station Gateway

High Street East

The vibrant eastern end of the High Street has a strong identity, celebrating Gillingham's diversity, history, and local pride. Known for its bustling retail scene, it draws in both locals and visitors with thriving independent shops and businesses. At its heart, the street is a public event space and civic square, hosting multi-cultural markets and festivals. Sappers Walk honours Gillingham's heroes with its striking mural, creating a bright, welcoming space. The wide, pedestrian-friendly route to the train station is easy to navigate, framed by greenery and beautiful buildings, making the area engaging and people-focused.

Station Gateway



The Station Gateway is the front door to Gillingham, warmly welcoming locals home and offering visitors a home-from-home experience. Well cared for and always active, this area serves as both a key arrival point and a lively town centre destination. A well looked-after multi-use community space provides opportunities for people to connect, access services, and engage with seasonal displays and events that bring energy to the station area.
Both the views and pedestrian links from the station to the eastern end of the High Street are green, safe, and fully accessible, making movement through the town centre easy and inviting for everyone.

What could this look like?

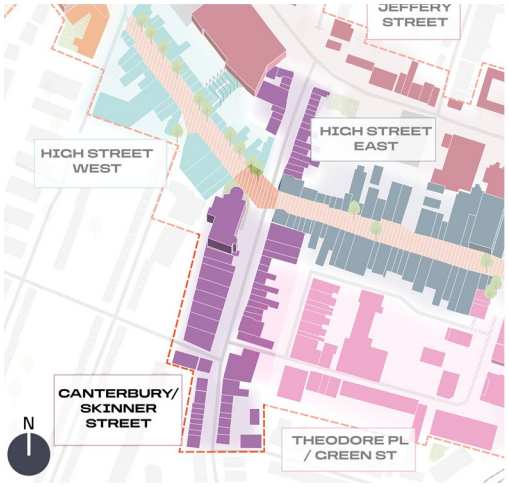
Introduce widened pavements and greenery in James Street

Improve surrounding area for a better connection from station to high street

Host a wider variety of markets during different times of the year

Enhance bridge opposite the station for a safer entrance

Canterbury/ Skinner Street



Canterbury Street and Skinner Street meet the High Street at a key civic junction, marked by St Mark's Church and the old Barclays Bank. As gateways into Gillingham, they welcome visitors and connect the town centre with surrounding neighbourhoods. Lined with independent shops, small businesses, and eateries, they support local enterprise and sustainable living. Leisure spaces, cafés, and restaurants create a welcoming atmosphere into the evening. With well-managed parking and pedestrian spaces, this part of town is accessible and inviting for all.

What could this look like?

Highlight St. Marks Church

Promote a variety of shops to celebrate local talent

Improve empty building flanks with murals

Jeffery Street

Jeffery Street is a key arrival point for visitors by bus or car and a gateway between the High Street and northern neighbourhoods. It features clear signposting, public art, and a safe pedestrian and cycle route, linking cyclists from the Great Lines without passing through the High Street. Lined with greenery, it feels inviting and accessible, with new homes and traffic-calming measures creating a people-friendly space that draws visitors and residents into the vibrant town centre.

What could this look like?

Revitalise back of buildings for community engagement

Utilise empty units as meanwhile spaces

Foster pedestrian safety: covered bus stops, wider pavements

Theodore Place/ Green Street and Balmoral Gardens

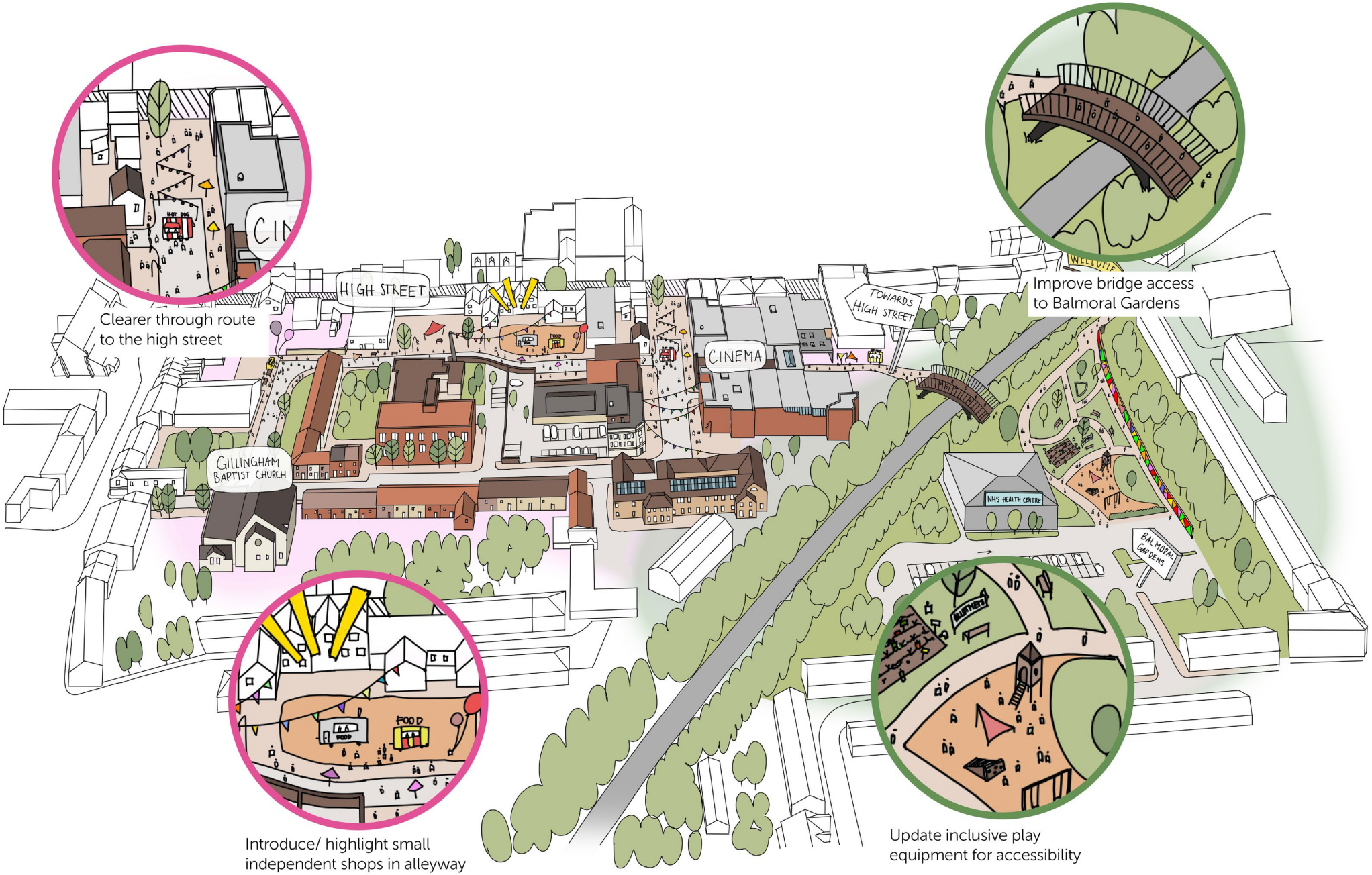
Theodore Place

At the eastern end of the High Street, Green Street's civic square is a vibrant hub for community events, framed by heritage buildings and thriving independent shops. The area blends history with a dynamic town centre feel. Previous underused sites now feature attractive new homes, adding activity and a stronger sense of community. Pedestrian-friendly laneways connect the square to Balmoral Gardens, creating a safe, inviting route. With service areas, drop-off zones, and well-maintained green spaces, it remains an enjoyable and accessible place for all.

Balmoral Gardens

Balmoral Gardens is Gillingham's green gem, a welcoming and inclusive space designed for all ages and abilities, with safe, well-lit connections linking it to both the Station and High Street. With a community-led programme of events, the gardens are a lively and enjoyable place to spend time. Thoughtfully designed planting, seating, and open spaces creates a relaxing environment with plenty of space for events to take place. Community allotments add to its charm, while vibrant and accessible play areas ensure fun for everyone.

What could this look like?



4. ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is a **catalogue of projects** that has been developed by Gillingham's Community Panel with the support of Medway Council, Design South East and BPTW through the co-design process.

While these projects focus on the Town Centre, they also present opportunities to link with wider strategies as well as initiatives across the broader area and build on existing and future town centre efforts by a wider range of residents, community groups, businesses and others. The Action Plan is envisioned as a **'living document'** which can be updated regularly, including opportunity to include additional projects following wider engagement.

The Action Plan for each area will guide future work for the community, Medway Council and other key stakeholders to realise the longer Vision for Gillingham.

The Action Plan includes potential quick starts projects that address each theme and priority identified by the Community Panel. The opportunity is not to collaboratively co-create and develop each project.

The success of Gillingham's collective Vision relies on active community involvement. Residents, businesses and local organisations are encouraged to take ownership of projects, contributing to their delivery, programming and long-term legacy. Many of these proposals can be carefully structured to allow for an incremental and coordinated approach to implementation, enabling an active role for the community, stakeholders and council as appropriate.

While individual actions will make valuable contributions, it is through collective effort over time that Vision for Gillingham can be realised. Section 5 provides further details on the next steps for bringing these projects to life.

Proposed Town Centre Wide Strategies

The following strategic initiatives have been identified as proposed overarching priorities across multiple Town Centre Areas. These strategies will help ensure a cohesive approach to placemaking, infrastructure improvements and long-term town centre activation.

No.	Strategy	Description
1	Gillingham Town Centre Community Chest	A fund that allows full, partial and seed funding for a range of cultural and community projects, which can be supported by a range of groups, including local businesses
2	Public Realm Strategy	An overarching strategy for the town centre to coordinate activities and small scale improvements within or fronting public spaces, such as bunting, shopfront improvements, outdoor seating in communal spaces, enhance accessibility for all users and civic pride initiatives. This should integrate the '**Love Gillingham**' branding wherever possible, alongside a **social media strategy** to engage residents and increase visitors.
3	Wayfinding Strategy	This will develop clear and consistent signage celebrating the diversity of local businesses, guiding pedestrians to key locations, transport hubs, green spaces and educational facilities as decided by the wider community.
4	Lighting Strategy	An overall approach will Improve pedestrian lighting to enhance safety at night while also contributing to creating a more beautiful town centre by highlighting key features, including feature buildings, murals and landscape
5	Waste Strategy	This will coordinate designated waste points for businesses, high street users and town centre residents whilst incorporating **recycling initiatives**.
6	Movement Strategy	The strategy will develop a comprehensive transport plan to improve pedestrian safety, bus accessibility (including enhanced bus stops, service improvements, potential for park 'n ride and hop on/off town centre bus service), vehicular access and parking and congestion management across the town centre.
7	Tree Planting Strategy	This will focus on maintaining and expanding green infrastructure, ensuring that future landscaping efforts align with the needs of an urban town centre and sustainability aspirations.
8	Worthwhile Use Strategy	This strategy will identify and map vacant properties and potential public realm and open space areas within the town centre where community groups and local organisations and businesses can easily facilitate local events, pop-ups or other worthwhile uses to reactivate underutilised spaces.
9	Town Centre Design Code	Develop a town centre design code to explore how the town centre can grow to accommodate future change and to celebrate and enhance historic character.

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Western Gateway

Culture and Community Life

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
1	Transform the Library into a Cultural Hub	Adapt the library for multi-use, including incorporating an art gallery, an improved book selection and a community book-sharing scheme targeting all ages, including youth, teenagers and older residents.	N/A	N/A	Partial
2	Host Pop-up Outdoor Cinema and Cultural Events	Organise seasonal outdoor cinema screenings in Great Lines Park and other places, potentially led by the Cultural Hub.	N/A	N/A	Partial

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
3	Create a Gateway	Install an archway or entrance feature to create a welcoming entrance to the town centre and improve wayfinding.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Partial
4	Enhance Green and Play Spaces	Increase accessible green areas, introduce more play spaces and improve public seating.	N/A	✓	N/A
5	Improve Public Transport and Pedestrian Access	Enhance bus stops and bus connectivity and introduce raised crossings for pedestrian safety.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
6	Develop a Wellness and Community Garden	Transform the Marlborough Road annexe area as an extension of Great Lines Heritage Park into a shared green space with community food-growing opportunities and potential deck chair hire for use in the park.	N/A	✓	Partial
7	Activate Mill Road Play Area Park for Events	Repurpose the park area near the Leisure Centre as a flexible spill-out event space.	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Western Gateway

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
8	Establish a Mobility Hub for Accessibility	Provide mobility scooter hire and accessible public WCs in key locations.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A
9	Create a Community Café and/or Pub space	Support the development of a high-quality café or pub as a social gathering point within another community initiative, such as the Cultural Hub, Wellness Garden or Mobility Hub.	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Introduce a Library of Things	Set up a borrowing scheme for tools, toys and other items to support families and to promote greater sense of community.	N/A	N/A	Partial

Improving Buildings

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
11	Redevelop Marlborough Road Annexe Building as a Community Hub	Transform the Marlborough Road annexe building into a multi-purpose space supporting park activities and community services, co-located with the Wellness Garden.	N/A	✓	N/A
12	Reimagine the building at 6 High Street	Explore options for repurposing the building next to Hollywood Bowl to better serve the community.	N/A	N/A	N/A

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High Street West

Culture and Community Life

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
1	Transform the Library into a Cultural Hub	Develop and display a map highlighting key uses and the multicultural identity of the area.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Yes

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
2	Create a Fully Pedestrian-friendly High Street with Timed Closures	Implement a gated system for a traffic-free environment during the day and explore night-time closures.	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Enhance Seating and Greenery for Social Spaces	Install comfortable benches, picnic tables, and integrated seating. Enhance public space with improved planting and community gardening opportunities.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	N/A
4	Improve High Street Safety with Lighting	Upgrade lighting around key areas such as Britton Farm Mall, using solar panels where possible.	Lighting Strategy	N/A	Partial
5	Introduce Canopies for Weather Protection	Provide sheltered walkways along the High Street while maintaining visibility and greenery.	N/A	N/A	Partial
6	Support Outdoor Café Culture and Active Street Life	Expand outdoor seating for cafés and restaurants to encourage socialising in public spaces.	N/A	N/A	N/A

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High Street West

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
7	Improve Pedestrian Safety with a Raised Crossing	Install a raised table to enhance pedestrian priority at the eastern end of the High Street.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
8	Enhance Cleanliness and Business Waste Management	Designate better bin storage areas for businesses and implement measures to keep public spaces clean.	Waste Strategy	N/A	Yes

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
9	Introduce an Intergenerational Skills Café	Create a café space that offers gaming, coding and computer skill-sharing sessions across different age groups as well as other engaging uses to bring people together, such as Escape Rooms.	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Support Independent Shops and Multi-use Spaces	Maintain the independent retail scene while introducing flexible spaces for baking workshops, cinema nights and pop-ups.	N/A	N/A	N/A
11	Develop a Youth and Community Hub	Establish a dedicated space for young people.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
12	Expand Co-Working Spaces	Provide hot desks and co-working areas to support freelancers and small businesses.	N/A	✓	N/A

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High Street West

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
13	Signpost and expand role of Medway Learning & Skills Hub	Ensure stronger links between the Medway Learning & Skills Hub and the High Street by introducing signage and potentially linking activities to spaces and strategies to enhance the town centre.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Yes
14	Upgrade Public Toilets for Better Accessibility	Improve the quality and availability of public toilets in the area.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A

Improving Buildings

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
15	Illuminate St. Mark's Church with Feature Lighting	Use architectural lighting to highlight St. Mark's as a key landmark.	Lighting Strategy	✓	Partial
16	Implement a Coordinated Shopfront Strategy	Unify shop signage with a consistent design approach, such as a shared colour palette or font selection.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A

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High Street East

Culture and Community Life

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
1	Launch High Street 'Love Gillingham' Branding and Street Banners	Encourage businesses to use branding elements and install banners to reinforce the area's identity and sense of pride.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
2	Encourage a Public Events and Multi-Cultural Market Space	Establish a designated space for events, markets and cultural celebrations for businesses and the community.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A
3	Celebrate Medway Heroes Through Public Art and Exhibitions	Promote murals, exhibitions and events showcasing local heroes, including along Sappers Walk.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	Partial
4	Encourage Walking Groups and Heritage Tours	Organise social walking groups that promote health, exercise and local history.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Yes
5	Strengthen Business Collaboration	Engage local business owners to support events, improve their shopfronts and contribute to a stronger and more proactive retail environment.	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	Improve Safety Through Increased Police Presence and a Pop-Up Police Hub	Enhance security and perceived safety by establishing a more visible community policing presence.	N/A	N/A	N/A

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
7	Install Gateway Features at Both Ends of High Street	Celebrate town centre entrances and enhance pedestrian priority and safety at these points.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	N/A

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High Street East

Improving Streets and Spaces					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
8	Repair and Upgrade Pavements	Address tree root damage and uneven surfaces to ensure greater accessibility.	Movement and Tree Planting Strategy	N/A	N/A
9	Enhance Street Lighting and Maintain Public Realm Features	Fix broken lights and ensure greater public space maintenance.	Lighting Strategy	✓	Partial
10	Improve Pedestrian Safety with a Raised Crossing at the Station	Slow traffic and enhance accessibility from the station to the High Street.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
11	Upgrade Bus Stops and Enforce Parking Restrictions	Reduce congestion at bus stops and penalise illegal and anti-social car parking.	Movement Strategy	N/A	
12	Introduce More Greenery and Planting	Add well-suited street trees and planting to enhance the public realm.	Tree Planting Strategy	N/A	N/A
13	Implement a Consistent and Comprehensive Wayfinding System	Improve signage across the entire High Street.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Partial
14	Enhance Cleanliness and Business Waste Management	Install more bins including recycling bins, increase refuse collection and implement regular litter sweeps.	Waste Strategy	N/A	Partial

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High Street East

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
15	Activate Vacant Buildings with Pop-Ups and Community Uses	Engage property owners to encourage temporary uses for vacant shops.	Worthwhile Uses Strategy	N/A	N/A
16	Expand 'Love Gillingham' Events and Initiatives	Organise a calendar of events celebrating local culture and businesses.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
17	Upgrade Street Market Infrastructure with Power Outlets and Neater Layouts	Improve street market functionality and organisation.	Lighting and Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial

Improving Buildings

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
18	Enhance the Appearance of Shopfronts and Gable Ends	Improve signage, de-clutter façades and ensure a cohesive design, especially on Sappers Walk.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A
19	Use Love Gillingham Branding on Vacant Building Hoardings	Improve the visual appeal of empty buildings by incorporating branding on hoardings.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Yes

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Station Gateway

Culture and Community Life					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
1	Expand Pedestrian Space at Station Entrance	Widen pavements and create a better pedestrian environment around the station.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
2	Create a Better Movement Pattern around the Station	Introduce bus-only lanes, possibly for certain hours, and remove the car parking at the eastern end of the station on one side of the street.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
3	Welcome Visitors, including through Multilingual Signage	Install a 'Welcome to Gillingham' gateway feature, possibly on the railway bridge and include multiple languages to embrace Gillingham's diversity.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	Yes
4	Establish a Visitor Information Point	Provide a tourism desk or digital information hub offering guidance on accessing Gillingham town centre.		✓	Partial
5	Install an Interactive Wayfinding Map	Implement a rolling map (similar to Balmoral Gardens hospital site) to guide visitors to key destinations.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Yes
6	Install Historic Plaques and Storytelling Elements	Install plaques and narrative markers (potentially including heritage guides) to highlight Gillingham's proud history.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
7	Introduce Seasonal Decorations and Displays	Enhance the area with changing seasonal decorations, such as Christmas trees and themed installations.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Yes
8	Promote Local Identity with 'Love Gillingham' Banners and Club Signage	Display 'Love Gillingham' branding within the station.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Yes
9	Provide signage celebrating Gillingham Football Club	Provide signage stating 'Home of Gillingham FC along with wayfinding linking station and stadium.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Yes

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Station Gateway

Improving Streets and Spaces					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
10	Enhance the Station Bridge with Artwork or Signage	Improve the appearance of the bridge opposite the station with a welcome mural or sign.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
11	Upgrade Pedestrian Crossings for Safety and Accessibility	Install a zebra or raised crossing to improve station access to the High Street.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
12	Create a Safe and Dedicated Drop-Off Area	Establish a clearly marked and secure drop-off zone near the station.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
13	Remove Old Phone Boxes and Street Clutter	Declutter the area by removing redundant phone booths and outdated street furniture.	N/A	N/A	N/A
14	Extend Greenery and Improve Landscaping	Increase planting and trees to make the gateway more inviting.	Tree Planting Strategy	N/A	N/A
15	Improve Lighting and Wayfinding/ Information at Bus Stops and Transport Links	Upgrade lighting at bus stops and provide clearer signage for onward travel, including real time bus information.	Lighting and Movement Strategy	N/A	Partial
16	Enhance Pedestrian Links to Car Parks and Balmoral Gardens	Improve walkability and safety between the station, long-stay car park and Balmoral Gardens.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A

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Station Gateway

Town Centre Uses					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
17	Establish a Multi-use Community Hub and Digital Cafe in the Vacant Unit	Support a local business in the vacant unit at the station forecourt, which can encourage smaller local pop-ups	Worthwhile Uses Strategy	✓	N/A
18	Create a Police Contact Point to Improve Safety	Establish a visible police presence or community safety hub at the station.	N/A	N/A	N/A
19	Encourage Family-Friendly Businesses Near the Station	Support shops and amenities that cater to families.	Gillingham Town Centre Community Chest	N/A	N/A

Improving Buildings					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
20	Improve the Décor and Maintenance of the Train Station and Ticket Office	Upgrade interior and exterior of the station.	N/A	✓	Yes
21	Highlight the Architectural Character of Nearby Buildings with Feature Lighting	Use lighting to accentuate key historic buildings visible from the station.	Lighting Strategy	N/A	Partial

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Skinner Street / Canterbury Street

Culture and Community Life

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
1	Defined Gateway Features to Announce the Town Centre and Signpost nearby uses	Install additional town centre gateways and the top and bottom of Skinner/ Canterbury Streets.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A
2	Establish a Weekly Artisan and Street Food Market	Support independent traders with designated market spaces within a dedicated space, possibly within an existing shop space.	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Encourage signage that Celebrates Cultural Diversity of Local Businesses	Install signage celebrating the variety of local shops, takeaways and cultural businesses.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Partial
4	Improve Accessibility and Parking for Religious Venues	Identify suitable parking solutions to support the Hindi temple, mosque and church uses.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
5	Improve Street Safety and Walkability with Lighting	Install improved street lighting to make the area more pedestrian-friendly and safe.	Lighting Strategy	✓	Partial
6	Develop a Parking and Pedestrian Strategy	Reduce on-street parking to provide more pedestrian space where possible, implement time-limited zones to encourage short stay parking to support businesses , and explore off-street parking solutions to ease congestion.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A

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Skinner Street / Canterbury Street

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
7	Enhance Cleanliness and Business Waste Management	Install more bins, increase refuse collection and implement regular litter sweeps.	Waste Strategy	N/A	Yes
8	Introduce 'This Way to Town Centre' Signage	Install a raised crossing where Skinner/Canterbury Street meets the High Street to improve safety and accessibility.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
9	Support a Diverse Independent Retail Offer	Encourage a greater mix of independent shops and encourage diversification of similar takeaway businesses.	N/A	N/A	N/A

Improving Buildings

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
10	Implement a Coordinated Shopfront Strategy	Improve the appearance of independent shops with unified signage, coordinated colour palettes and common design guidelines.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A

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Jeffery Street

Culture and Community Life

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
1	Promote Gillingham with a Wayfinding and Information Board	Install a signage board at key locations (car parks, bus stops) to showcase local businesses, particularly multicultural food shops.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Yes
2	Install a Landmark Mural on Building Backs	Commission a large-scale murals (similar to Luton Arches) to enhance the street's identity and make it more inviting.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
3	Upgrade King Street Bus Stops for Better Connectivity	Improve space, provide covered shelters and consider renaming stops (e.g: Sappers Walk).	Movement and Public Realm Strategy	✓	N/A
4	Reduce Traffic Congestion and Improve Pedestrian Safety	Implement measures to redirect traffic from High Street East and create a safer environment, and consider a bus-only and one-way traffic system.	Movement Strategy	✓	N/A
5	Improve Street Lighting for Safety	Upgrade lighting at pedestrian crossings and key desire lines to the High Street.	Lighting Strategy	N/A	Partial
6	Enhance Landscaping with Street Trees and Planting	Introduce greenery and regular street trees.	Tree Planting Strategy	N/A	N/A
7	Introduce a 20mph Reduced Speed Zone	Implement traffic calming to create a safer and more pedestrian-friendly street.	Movement Strategy	✓	N/A

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Jeffery Street

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
8	Improve Car Park Maintenance and Accessibility	Upgrade surfaces, lighting and pedestrian access to car parks, and possibly new or enhanced building fronts to provide overlooking.	Movement Strategy	✓	N/A

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
9	Develop a Transport Hub to Serve the High Street	Create a coordinated transport plan, improving access for all users.	Movement Strategy	✓	N/A
10	Establish a Youth Centre for Community Engagement	Create a dedicated space for young people in the area.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
11	Upgrade Public Toilets for Better Access and Maintenance	Improve the quality and availability of public restrooms.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A

Improving Buildings

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
12	Enhance the Appearance of Residential Buildings	Support repainting and façade improvements, exploring what powers the council or tenants may have.	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Theodore Place / Green Street

Culture and Community Life

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
1	Promote Gillingham's Food Culture	Support independent food businesses and create opportunities for food-focused events and markets.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
2	Leverage Social Media for Local Promotion	Use digital platforms to highlight businesses, events and community activities.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
3	Introduce a One-Way System for Theodore Place	Support independent food businesses and create opportunities for food-focused events and markets.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
4	Designate a Pick-up/ Drop-off Zone for the High Street	Use digital platforms to highlight businesses, events and community activities.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
5	Improve Short-Stay Parking and Explore Additional Spaces	Implement High Street parking for quick visits and investigate new longer-term parking solutions for longer visits.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
6	Enhance Pedestrian Routes to the High Street	Improve the Motor Lane alleyway with improved public realm, lighting and small scale active front and reopen the Nisa pedestrian connection to High Street.	Movement Strategy	✓	N/A

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Theodore Place / Green Street

Improving Streets and Spaces

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
7	Upgrade the Motor Lane Bridge for a Safer, More Inviting Link	Improve the pedestrian accessibility, visual appeal and safety of the bridge at the end of Motor Lane.	N/A	✓	N/A
8	Create a Civic Square at the End of Green Street	Transform this space into a well-designed civic gathering area.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	N/A
9	Remove Redundant Phone Boxes and Clutter	Declutter the civic square by removing outdated phone boxes and other obstructions.	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Increase Greenery	Introduce suitable street trees for a more inviting public realm and areas for landscaping.	Tree Planting Strategy	N/A	N/A
11	Improve Street Lighting	Better lighting for a safer, more inviting public realm, including feature lighting on historic buildings.	Lighting Strategy	N/A	Partial

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
12	Establish an Independent Shopping Alley	Support small, independent shops in a compact, retail and cafe spaces along Motor Lane, including providing active fronts to the Salvation Army halls.	Gillingham Town Centre Community Chest	✓	N/A

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Theodore Place / Green Street

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
13	Encourage New Uses That Attract Students/Younger People	Introduce student-friendly businesses, including affordable food options and potential student accommodation.	N/A	N/A	N/A
14	Prioritise Business Growth over Residential Development	Focus on supporting new businesses while ensuring new development balances commercial and residential needs.	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Explore Turnover-Based Rent Models for Independent Businesses	Investigate ways to make retail rents more accessible for small businesses.	Worthwhile Use Strategy	N/A	N/A

Improving Buildings

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
16	Improve the Façades of Key Buildings, Especially with Heritage Features	Restore and enhance the appearance of local feature buildings, which may be historic or listed.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A
17	Transform Empty Buildings into Meanwhile Uses	Activate vacant properties for temporary pop-ups, events, or community initiatives.	Worthwhile Use Strategy	N/A	Partial
18	Redevelop Key Sites for Adaptive Reuse or Redevelopment	Explore the longer term potential of the Royal Mail and BT sites for housing and repurpose the cinema/snooker hall for community-oriented uses.	Worthwhile Use Strategy	N/A	N/A

To keep growing the catalogue, the Medway Council website has a section where you can add new content and help keep this area up to date.

Balmoral Gardens

Culture and Community Life					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
1	Host Seasonal Festivals and Celebrate Community	Organise festivals, markets and celebrations such as flower festivals, school pageants and horticulture competition.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	Partial
2	Celebrate Local Heroes Through Public Art	Integrate local heroes into murals and other public art, including local heroes such as Will Adams, Chaplin, David Frost and Rhodes, possibly along the garden walls.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	Partial
3	Strengthen Links with Gillingham Football Club	Collaborate with Gillingham FC for local events, community engagement and sponsorship opportunities within the green.	N/A	N/A	Partial
4	Upgrade Play Equipment for Accessibility and Inclusion	Improve playgrounds with more accessible equipment such as wheelchair-friendly swings.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	N/A
5	Establish a 'Friends of Balmoral Gardens' Volunteer Group	Encourage community stewardship through a local volunteer group to help with local stewardship.	Public Realm Strategy	✓	N/A
Improving Streets and Spaces					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
6	Enhance Safe and Clean Routes to the High Street Designate a Pick-up/ Drop-off Zone for the High Street	Improve pathways, address safety concerns and ensure a well-lit, inviting route to the town centre.	Waste and Refuse and Lighting Strategy	N/A	N/A

To keep growing the catalogue, the Medway Council website has a section where you can add new content and help keep this area up to date.

Balmoral Gardens

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
7	Introduce a Free 1-Hour Parking Scheme	Provide a short-term free parking option to encourage more High Street visits to support local businesses.	Movement Strategy	N/A	N/A
8	Enhance Landscaping with Sensory and Therapeutic Planting	Create a relaxing and accessible green space with diverse planting for designed for the five senses, including growing of edible plants and herbs.	Tree Planting Strategy	✓	Partial
9	Improve Wayfinding with Better Signage to Local Destinations	Install clear street signs and directional markers to enhance navigation.	Wayfinding Strategy	N/A	Yes
10	Provide Additional Seating with Picnic Tables and Benches	Introduce varied seating options to support relaxation and social gatherings.	N/A	✓	N/A
11	Explore Gated Entrances for Safety at Certain Hours	Assess whether controlled access could improve night time security.	N/A	N/A	N/A

Town Centre Uses

No.	Project	Description	Town Centre-wide Strategy Link	Community Panel Priority Project	Potential Quick Starts
12	Introduce a Pop-Up Coffee Kiosk and Alfresco Dining Area	Provide food and drink options to enhance visitor experience.	N/A	N/A	Partial
13	Upgrade Public Toilets for Better Access and Maintenance	Ensure clean, well-maintained facilities.	Public Realm Strategy	N/A	N/A

Balmoral Gardens

Town Centre Uses					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
14	Install a Bandstand or Amphitheatre for Community Events	Create a permanent space for live performances, music and public gatherings whilst creating a focal point for the green space.	N/A	✓	N/A
15	Introduce an Outdoor Gym and Well-Being Activities	Establish fitness areas linked to the health centre, promoting active lifestyles.	N/A	✓	N/A
Improving Buildings					
No.	**Project**	**Description**	**Town Centre-wide Strategy Link**	**Community Panel Priority Project**	**Potential Quick Starts**
16	Enhance Walk-In Health Centre Services and Facilities	Improve accessibility and quality of healthcare services in the gardens.	N/A	N/A	N/A

5. MAKING IT HAPPEN

The quotes below reflect feedback collected from the Community Panel's post-workshop forms, which were reviewed and shared among facilitators by DSE.

The co-creation process formed the basis for this Community-led Vision and Action Plan, to identify key opportunities for change within Gillingham Town Centre for the benefit of the wider community. The Community Panel played a crucial role in shaping and reviewing this document to ensure factual accuracy, but will also be integral to making it happen.

Building on the success of the workshops so far, we aim to harness the ongoing support and enthusiasm of panel members. Feedback from previous sessions indicates a strong desire for continued participation, with 100% of respondents stating they enjoyed the first two workshops and found them interesting. Additionally, 89% (17 out of 19) of respondents felt they were able to contribute and be heard, reinforcing the importance of creating an inclusive and structured platform for dialogue, however the ongoing process working hand-in-hand with the community should aim to continue to achieve such strong support whilst ensuring an inclusive and supportive approach.

The Vision and Action Plan will inform a stakeholder event in summer 2025, where the Community Panel will share their work and engage with the wider community and stakeholders. This event will be pivotal in growing interest and fostering collaboration to drive delivery.

To support this, Medway Council will undertake stakeholder mapping and facilitate the engagement process, ensuring key groups, including the Community Panel, Gillingham Town Centre Taskforce, Gillingham Town Centre Forum and additional external stakeholders, are involved. It will be crucial to ensure these groups are able to collaborate in order to maximise impacts within the town centre.

Medway Council will also support this evolving Action Plan through the newly established Town Centre Programme Manager role, who will help to facilitate implementation and ensure Gillingham's regeneration aligns with community expectations.

In order for the next stages of the Community Panel to progress, it will be essential to establish a clear governance approach and structure, including how frequently the panel meets. This will ensure that the outlined actions are effectively taken forward with the community, maintaining momentum and fostering long-term local ownership of the Vision and Action Plan, whilst allowing flexibility for the Action Plan to respond to project progression and community desires.

Some comments that we have received from the Community Panel:

> Brilliant so far
> - P.M.

> Thank you for the opportunity!
> - A.D.

> Fantastically organised, really engaging!
> - L.C.

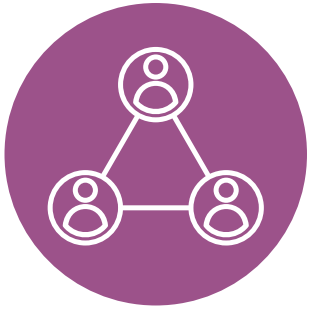
> Great project, thank you and well done! Let's hope this leads to a fantastic Gillingham
> - Anonymous

Next Steps

To guide the next stages of the Action Plan and continued co-design process with the Community Panel, key stakeholders and key partners, the following steps are suggested:

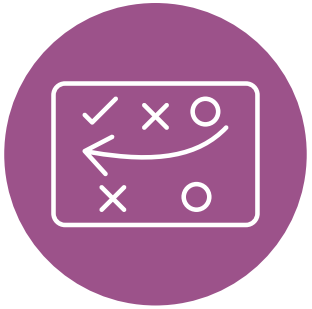
List Project Priorities

The Community Panel, in collaboration with the Town Centre Programme Manager, should continue meeting—expanding membership if needed—to define and prioritise projects. Section 4 should remain a live document, allowing project lists to evolve.



Engage with Stakeholders and Key Partners

Use the templates as a framework for discussions with stakeholders to refine proposals and align them with wider regeneration goals. Projects will require ongoing consultation, collaboration, and refinement, focusing on feasibility and funding. Early stages should identify a broad range of potential partners rather than assigning definitive leads, while professional input can provide indicative cost estimates and timescales to guide decision-making.



Define a Project Delivery Strategy

A clear delivery roadmap should be developed for selected projects, outlining key phases, resources, governance, stakeholder roles, and progress milestones. To maximise impact, projects must stay adaptable and integrate with future town centre strategies (see Section 4 – Action Plan). Flexibility will allow the Action Plan to evolve with emerging priorities and support wider aspirations.

APPENDICES
List of Figures

"Fig.01 Early Medway Towns by R. Creighton" on page 8
Wikipedia contributors (2025). Chatham Dockyard.

"Fig.02 Chatham engraving by William Miller" on page 8
Wikipédia commons (2025). Fichier: Chatham engraving by William Miller after Turner (1838).

"Fig.03 Kent XIX - OS Map" on page 8
Klokan Tecnologies GmbH (no date). Kent XIX - OS Six-Inch Map by Ordnance Survey.

"Fig.04 Historic Dockyard Chatham" on page 8
History of the Dockyard (2020).

"Fig.05 Gillingham High Street 1978" on page 8
Kent Online (October 2024). Hayes, P. (2024) 'Classic pictures from Kent towns in the 1970s'.

"Fig.06 Spectators at the Gillingham Christmas lights switch-on" on page 9
Kent Online (November 2024). Cox, L. (2018) 'Town turns festive as lights go on'.

"Fig.07 Vintage postcards of Gillingham by Stephen Carr" on page 9
Gillingham Town Centre Masterplan & Delivery Strategy (2019). Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design.

Fig.08 Gillingham Woolworth Store 9
Wordpress Woolies Buildings (2020). Gillingham Woolworths – Store 138.

"Fig.09 Medway's Fuse Festival" on page 9
Kent Online (February 2015). Freeman, C. (2015) 'The Fuse has been re-lit,' Kent Online, 26 February.

"Fig.10 Gillingham Library & Community Hub" on page 9
Google Maps. Retrieved on November 2024. Gillingham Library, High Street.

"Fig.11 Gillingham's Bonfire fireworks" on page 9
My Kent Family (October 2019). Dixon, R. (2019) 'Laser show to replace bonfire'.

"Fig.12 Rochester, historic centre" on page 10
Kent Online (April 2024). Harbert, J. (2024) 'New images of flagship riverside homes project revealed'.

"Fig.13 Chatham, The Paddock" on page 10
Blakedown Landscapes (2025). Wellbelove, C. (2025) Blakedown landscapes.

"Fig.14 Gillingham, Town Centre" on page 10
Google Maps. Retrieved on January 2025. Gillingham High Street.

"Fig.15 Strood, Town Centre" on page 10
Visit Medway (no date). Destination Medway, Strood.

"Fig.16 Rainham, Town Centre" on page 10
RedDoor Homes (2024) Digital, B. (2024) Property for sale in Rainham.

"Fig.17 University of Kent Medway Campus" on page 12
Cornish Architects (no date). Cornish Architects (2019) The Gillingham Building.

"Fig.18 Great Lines Heritage Park" on page 12
Urban Nature Atlas (no date). The Great Lines Heritage Park.

"Fig.19 MidKent College Campus" on page 12
Jarrett, A., Chambers, R., OBE, and Medway Council (2035) Waterfront University City: connecting innovation people and place; driving growth for all.

"Fig.20 Medway Maritime Hospital" on page 12
Medway (no date). Our history.

"Fig.21 Medway Park Sports and Leisure Centre" on page 12
Google Maps. Retrieved on January 2025. Medway Park Sports, Gillingham.

"Fig.22 Gillingham Football Stadium" on page 12
Gillingham Football Club (no date) The History of Priestfield | Gillingham F.C.

"Fig.23 War Memorial at Mill Road" on page 14
Historic England (no date) Gillingham War Memorial, non civil Parish - 1433120.

"Fig.24 Medway Skills & Learning Hub" on page 14
Re-Gen UK (no date). Case Studies - Britton Farm Skills Hub.

"Fig.25 Gillingham Library & Community Hub" on page 14
Google Maps. Retrieved on November 2024. Gillingham Library, High Street.

"Fig.26 Gillingham Railway Station" on page 14
Google Maps. Retrieved on November 2024. Gillingham Railway Station, Gillingham.

"Fig.27 Sappers Walk: Historic Mural" on page 14
Google Maps. Retrieved on November 2024. Sappers Walk, Gillingham.

"Fig.28 Salvation Army" on page 14
The Salvation Army (no date). Gillingham.

Artist impression visually representing some of the early ideas and aspirations that emerged from discussions with the community panel.

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